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Yonkers Green Policy Task Force News Blast

October 21, 2009

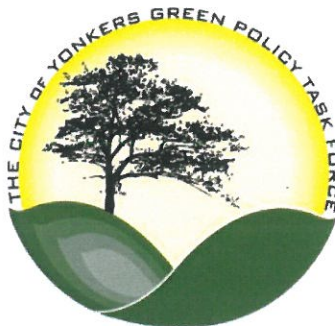
The Next GPTF Meeting is
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The Next GPTF Meeting is Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 6:30 pm



GPTF@YONKERS.NY.GOV
 914.377.6067

The next Green Policy Task Force meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21 at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th floor of City Hall.

The following is on the agenda:

1. Energy

- Curtis Karmaz of Mercury Solar Systems to discuss

solar energy.

- Westchester County's methane gas emissions program
- GPTF and Quality of Life Day

2. Transportation

- Bus grant with Anna Sollozzo from YPS updating GPTF
- Idling law update

3. Recycling

- Yonkers compost site usage
- Master recycling program update
- Paper recycling in the schools
- Downtown Program for recycling report
- Warburton Ave. recycling

4. Land Use

- Goals for 2010

Any additional items that may properly come before this Committee.

Taming Your Backyard Leaves



The GPTF wants to remind all residents **not** to put their bagged fall leaves in plastic bags for [curbside pick up](#)-- or the city simply won't take them! (Same goes for dropping them off at the Organic Waste Disposal Yard. No plastic bags will be accepted!)

"We will maintain our zero tolerance policy for leaves bagged in anything other than brown paper compost bags," said Ken Greehan of the DPW. "Plastic does not compost. It never has and it never will."

Residents can, however, put leaves in open containers such as trash cans at curbside for pick up or bring them to the Organic Yard for bagless disposal. Same goes for landscapers although they must first get a sticker from DPW by calling 914-377- 6751.

Under no circumstances will grass clippings be accepted, open container or brown bagged, curbside or at the Yonkers site. Grass clippings should be left on the lawn to feed the soil or composted on your property.

Leaf pick up starts Wednesdays this week until Dec. 9. The yard, located at 610 Nepperhan Avenue (North of Lake Avenue), is open six days a week from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is closed on Sundays.

ONLY ORGANIC MATERIALS ARE ALLOWED AT THIS YARD:

- Leaves
- Branches up to 10" thick
- Live Christmas trees
- No grass clippings (clippings should be left on the lawn)
- No tree stumps
- No plastic bags
- No grass clippings

Still, the GPTF encourages everyone to compost their leaves and grass clippings at home. (Also your kitchen scraps-- see article below.) The Task Force will soon offer classes on such practices after members become knighted as graduates of the [Westchester County Master Composter and Recycler Program](#) in December. In the meantime, please click [here](#) for a pamphlet on how to turn your yard waste into "Gardener's Gold."

Popping the Question: Real Man on the Street Interviews

The GPTF turned to residents to ask the following stumper.

"How many tons of yard waste did the City of Yonkers collect last year?"

We hit the streets to find answers.

"What is yard waste?" asked one



gentleman who was clearly not in the know. For the record, yard waste is comprised of grass, leaves, tree trimmings, and prunings. It is normally composted for use as dirt once it decomposes.



"Oh man. I got no idea. Maybe 2,000 tons?" said Miguel Perez, a Southwest resident, adding that he was the wrong guy to ask since he lives in an apartment. "My landlord does the rakes and lawnmower. Not me! "

Don't worry Miguel. You were warmer than most. Read on.

"You mean dog doo? Finally someone besides me is sick and tired of dogs doing their business on my street and the owners don't pick it up, that is for sure! So my guess is a pound per yard per year," said one woman who didn't want her name revealed. (We're happy to protect her identity given the answer!)

"There's that much litter out there?" asked a high school student named Vanessa at the bus stop.

OK. Clearly this job was not getting any easier. It was time to ask the GPTF for answers.

"I'd say 37,546 tons," guessed Terry Joshi.

"Put me down for between 35 and 40 tons," Chairman Bob Walters suggested.

"No one but the DPW will ever get this exactly!" cried another member. "They track this type of information."

With that, it was time to go directly to the source. Ready for the answer?

45,390 tons of yard waste was collected in 2008.

But wait. There's more!

We should be proud of our community and its collection workers for recovering the following in 2008:

19,732 tons of metal

6, 449 tons of paper

3, 558 tons of commingles (The city picks up newspapers and commingles - glass, plastics (#1 and #2 and plastic laundry bottles), and metals on alternate Wednesdays. Commingles should be clean and lids removed. Newspapers should be loosely placed in an open container, no plastic bags.

Questions? Call the county's recycling hotline at (914) 813-5420.

Until next time...

When the Energizer Bunny Dies



We use them in cameras, alarm clocks, radios-- almost every electronic thing we own requires batteries.

Only few people stop to consider their disposal long after the Energizer Bunny has died or the toy car won't pop wheelies anymore. We're talking



contamination by such toxins as mercury, cadmium, lithium, and copper which when added to the wastestream are harmful to human and environmental health. Multiply that by all the sizes and types of batteries out there,

including car batteries, and we have a problem, Houston.

According to the EPA, each US household, on average, discards an estimated two pounds of batteries annually. That equals to 2.5 million pounds of batteries entering our waste cycle each year.

The GPTF urges everyone to please recycle their batteries. [Here's how:](#)

Take to a Household Recycling Day or Drop off at a Home Depot or Radio Shack:

Rechargeable batteries Nickel Cadmium (Ni-Cd) Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH) Lithium Ion (Li-ion) Small Sealed Lead Acid (Pb) batteries weighing up to two pounds.

These above types of batteries are commonly found in: wireless phones, laptop computers, camcorders, digital cameras, radio- controlled toys, and cordless power tools.

Rechargeable Batteries: Most consumer products using these batteries have been designed to allow easy battery removal for proper disposal and recycling.

If the battery cannot be removed, the entire product may be brought to a local drop-off site or County Household Recycling Day.

Take to Household Recycling Day:

Non-rechargeable batteries - Alkaline, Carbon and Zinc.

Alkaline rechargeable batteries - The kind used for toys, radios, appliances, flashlights, etc. EXAMPLES: AAA, AA, C, D, 9 Volt, Long Life C and D Cells, etc.

For a list of Westchester County Household Recycling Days, click [here](#).

San Francisco OK's Toughest Recycling Laws in the Country

San Francisco is on the green cutting edge, mandating that residents compost their kitchen waste... or soon face \$100-\$500 fines.

Starting Oct. 21, every home and business in the city must have three separate color-coded bins for waste: black for trash, blue for recycling and now green for composting.

The city's requirement - the first of its kind in the nation - is part of a larger plan to have San

Franciscans sending nothing to landfills or incinerators by 2020. The law should cut about two-thirds of the 618,000 tons of waste the city sent to landfill in 2007.



What happens after that? The resulting compost will be sold to farms, vineyards and golf courses around the region for its soil-enriching ingredients of nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, and

calcium.

"It's a false phobia that things are going to smell," said one city official there. "It's the same garbage you already had. It's just handling it differently, in a more environmentally responsible way."

When asked if such a program could be duplicated in Yonkers, we were told it would have to be a county initiative. While the GPTF looks into this, note that you can do something about it now by committing to compost at home.

Click [here](#) for a list of what can be composted from your kitchen. To read more, click on [this](#) news story.

Free Kayak Lessons



Want to learn how to kayak?

The [Yonkers Paddling and Rowing Club](#) offers free lessons (and kayaks) on Mondays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 7:00 p.m.

This twice-weekly event is held at either the JFK Marina in Yonkers off Warburton Ave., just north of the Hudson River Museum (turn left at the traffic light and go down the hill to the marina) or at the Beczak Beach (at 35 Alexander St., one block north of the Yonkers train station).

Call 914-318-4630 to confirm that day's departure location.

Time in a Bottle

The Green Policy Task Force included their newsletters, recycling stickers and green brochures in the Hudson River Quadricentennial Time Capsule that will be re-opened in 2109 during the 500th anniversary celebration of Henry Hudson's voyage.

"It will be interesting for those people to see how far Yonkers has come environmentally," said GPTF Chairman Bob Walters. "Hopefully they will, in turn, leave one for the following generation to track."

The "Burial Ceremony" will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 24 at Habirshaw Park / Beczak Environmental Center (35 Alexander Street, Yonkers).



Everyone is welcome to witness history in the making!

Conservation Cafe

Mark your calendars for Conservation Café, a free lecture series from 8 - 10 a.m. on Friday, October 30 at [Pace University](#) in Pleasantville, NY.

8 to 8:30 a.m.

Coffee and registration

8:30 a.m. -

Welcome by moderator Angelo Spillo, Director, Pace University Environmental Center.

Topics:

"Greenwashing" - Patricia J. Wood, Executive Director, Grassroots Environmental Education.

"Corporate Social Responsibility" - Dr. Larry Bridwell, Professor of International Business and Chair of the Graduate Management and International Business programs, Pace University.

"Government Procurement Successes and Challenges" - Lea Cullen, Westchester County Parks Sustainability Coordinator.

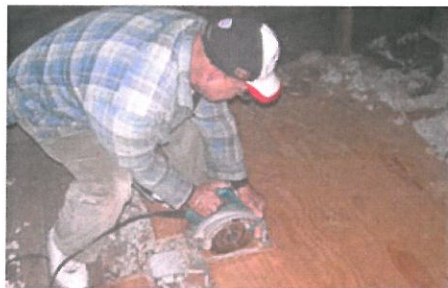
Please call (914) 864-7047 or reply to mqs5@westchestergov.com by Wednesday, October 28. Carpooling is encouraged. Coffee/beverages will be served.

Yonkers Weatherization Expo

Are you ready to take the next energy improvement step beyond covering the doggie door with an old yoga mat or rolling towels to lay across your leaky window sills?

Whether you rent or own, you can save serious money on energy costs and do well by the environment by

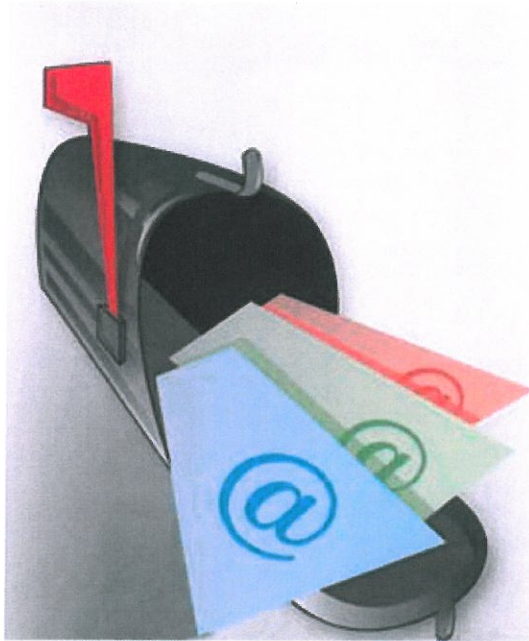
attending the [Greener Yonkers Weatherization Expo](#) 2009 between 2-8 p.m. on Nov. 5 at Phillipsburg Manor Hall, 2-8 Hudson St., Yonkers hosted by the Greyston Foundation's Yonkers Green Connection (YGC).



The Expo will provide many resources, including government weatherization programs, consultants, contractors, and real estate agencies to help you adapt your home to current environmental standards.

For more information, please contact Katherine Dukes at (914)-376-3900 x 267 or Nicole Stafford at (914) 376-3900 x 292.

Reader Email



Here's a note from a Faithful Reader:

Dear GPTF:

"In response to your tip to eat locally produced food, I LOVE the Thursday Farmers Market in downtown Yonkers and learned about it through your newsletter. I go there on my work lunch hour from the hospital. It is cheaper than most others I have been to which makes me want to go more! It is also healthier for my family and better for the environment."

Margaret from White Plains

For those who live outside the area, here's a [complete list](#) of all farmer's markets in Westchester County.

Editor's Note: The Yonkers Farmer's Market stays open until Nov. 19.

Field Work

GPTF member Terry Joshi (front); Coordinator Laura Fahrenthold, Yonkers City Council President Chuck Lesnick and GPTF member Mel Goldstein recruiting senior citizen volunteers at the Yonkers Raceway on behalf of the Volunteer Center last month.

If interested in a rewarding volunteer job with the GPTF, please contact Laura Fahrenthold at 914-377-6067.



This eblast is provided by the Yonkers City Council's [Green Policy Task Force](#). The Task Force meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th floor of City Hall. If you know of others in the environmental community who would like to receive this news or attend meetings, please email laura.fahrenthold@yonkersny.gov

From: Council President Chuck Lesnick with Chairman Bob Walters and Coordinator Laura Fahrenthold; District 1 Councilmember Pat McDow with Margaret Setterholm; District 2 Majority Leader Sandy Annabi with Nortrud Spero; District 3 Councilmember Joan Gronowski with Loretta Miraglia; District 4 Minority Leader Liam J. McLaughlin with Terry Joshi; District 5 Councilmember John Murtagh with Molly Roffman; District 6 Councilmember Dee Barbato with Mel Goldstein; Administration's Appointee Joe D'Lando.

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